

HOUSE RESOLUTION 8001

By Clemmons

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Joel Boyers for his heroism during the Waverly Flood.

WHEREAS, the members of this legislative body are honored to recognize those citizens whose quick thinking and decisive actions have saved the lives of those in peril; and

WHEREAS, on August 21, 2021, portions of Middle Tennessee were inundated with torrential flooding, with upwards of seventeen inches of rain falling on the area in twenty-four hours; and

WHEREAS, the greatest loss of life was in Waverly, where twenty people died in flood waters; at least 523 homes in Humphreys County were affected by the floods, including 272 that were completely destroyed; and

WHEREAS, Nashville helicopter pilot Joel Boyers had just finished a flying lesson with a student that fateful Saturday morning when he received a frantic phone call; a woman from Pennsylvania told him that her brother and his two daughters were trapped on the roof of their home in Waverly, surrounded by rushing flood waters and in grave danger; and

WHEREAS, though concerned about the hazardous flying conditions, Mr. Boyers knew he had to do everything he could to provide assistance; and

WHEREAS, once he got over Waverly, Joel Boyers saw disaster and destruction in every direction: houses on fire; homes pushed off their foundations; mobile homes floating; debris, trees, and cars piled up; and torrential waters cresting as high as six feet; and

WHEREAS, he spotted numerous people precariously clinging to their roofs, or on bridges and in trees, and immediately launched into action; and

WHEREAS, while Mr. Bowers had lost cellphone service and could not find his way to the imperiled man and his two daughters, he remembers that he "started picking off whoever I could in hopes that I'd find the original person"; and

WHEREAS, Joel Boyers started landing on roofs and carrying one person at a time to safety; in all, he believes he pulled seventeen people out of the flood-ravaged area, including a teenage girl who had been clinging onto a tree with one arm and a dog that was not hers with the other; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Boyers ended his mission ninety minutes later, when he ran low on fuel and saw professional rescue helicopters beginning to respond; thankfully, the woman who originally called him let him know that her brother and his daughters were eventually rescued; and

WHEREAS, Joel Boyers's actions were sure and decisive in the midst of a serious emergency; his service can only be categorized as outstanding, and he deserves proper recognition for his heroism on that fateful day; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor and commend Joel Boyers for his life-saving actions during the catastrophic Waverly Flood. We offer our sincerest gratitude for his exceptional service and extend to him our best wishes for every future success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.